

# ASHLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

JACKSON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT #5

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January 21, 2021

## A Word About Lincoln School And The Surrounding Property

Lincoln School has been part of the Ashland School District (ASD) for nearly 100 years. The original building was constructed in 1926 and the most recent addition was added in 1961. Lincoln School served elementary students until 2005 when the program was closed due to declining enrollment districtwide. Since then, ASD has continued to use Lincoln for our high school alternative program, some district offices, and this year as the temporary home for John Muir Outdoor School.

Throughout its 95-year history, the playground and greenspace at Lincoln have been open and accessible to the community during non-school hours, as is true for most district properties. **There are no plans to change this.** In other words, the Ashland community will continue to have the same access to this site as they have had since 1926.

With the closure of Lincoln's elementary program, and again more recently, we have been asked by community members about selling the property or turning it over to the City of Ashland. In the 2015-16 school year, the district formed a facilities committee to review and assess all ASD properties. This committee made the unanimous recommendation to the school board that Lincoln School be retained. In addition to the district programs that operate there, the site is strategically located right across the street from both Ashland High School and Southern Oregon University. For these reasons -- and given the need for student space during bond construction -- **the school board again agreed at our December 20, 2020 meeting that it would not be in the best interest of the school district or students to sell or surrender the Lincoln School property.**

What does this mean for the Ashland community and Lincoln School neighbors? In short, this means that the community will continue to enjoy responsible use of the playground and greenspace during non-school hours, as has been the case for decades.

The school district will continue to own and maintain the school building and property for the foreseeable future in the best interest of Ashland Students and the schools. When not in use for school sports, during summers and when the city has asked us to curtail water usage, the field will remain dry but may still be utilized.

Sincerely,

The Ashland School District Board of Directors